

...to Give Thanks to God...

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING *(in unison)*

Alpha and Omega, you are without question the beginning and the end. You existed before the creation of the world, and you will remain eternally. As we remember the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, we remember it with thanks. Thank you for taking him up into heaven that he may rule the heavens and the earth. Thank you that he, also, demonstrates to us your promises to us — that one day we will, also, be resurrected from the dead and live for eternity in the Kingdom of Heaven. In response to all you have given to us, we commit our offerings and our gifts to the work of the church as called by our Lord Jesus Christ. Guide our church leaders to invest it as you intend. In the name of the one ascended to be with you, Father. AMEN.

...and to Be Sent in God's Name.

CLOSING HYMN “How Firm a Foundation” #361

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

RESPONSE “Listen, God Is Calling” GTG #456
Glory to God (GTG) is a new hymnal for the PC(USA) — released in 2013.

¹ *Book of Common Worship*, 337.

² *Book of Common Worship*, 53.

³ *Book of Common Worship*, 56.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

May 24, 2020

Seventh Sunday of Easter

We Gather in God's Name...

PRAYER OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

{for silent prayer before starting the worship playlist or conference call}

Almighty God, your blessed Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Mercifully give us faith to trust that, as he promised, he abides with us on earth to the end of time; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.¹ AMEN.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GREETING

CALL TO WORSHIP *(based on Psalm 68, NRSV; choose a leader)*

One: Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the Lord,

All: **O rider in the heavens, the ancient heavens; listen, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice.**

One: Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel; and whose power is in the skies.

All: **Awesome is God in his sanctuary, the God of Israel; he gives power and strength to his people.**

One: Blessed be God!

All: **Let us worship God!**

HYMN OF PRAISE “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” #260

CALL TO CONFESSION *(led by one)*

Remember that our Lord Jesus can sympathize with us in our weaknesses, since in every respect he was tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with boldness approach the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.² Let us pray.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(about 30 seconds)*

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(in unison)*

Almighty God, giver of strength, too often we, also, look up to heaven anxious for your return to make all things right and to judge the world. We forget that you have appointed each of us to further the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth. Grant us the fortitude and initiative to recognize where you are already working and to work with you to bring justice to this world and to make your name known. Forgive our lack of participation in this work, and recognize our repentance. In the name of the one who modeled that work, our Lord Jesus. AMEN.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (*led by one*)

Hear the good news! The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, that we might be dead to sin, and alive to all that is good. I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.³ AMEN.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE (You may say: “The peace of Christ be with you.” and respond: “And also with you.”)

...to Proclaim God’s Word

FIRST READING Acts 1:6-14 <https://bit.ly/3e4KTjh>
{Pick someone in your household to read this scripture passage.}

EPISTLE READING 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 <https://bit.ly/3gaM96s>
{Pick another person, if possible, to read this passage.}

GOSPEL READING John 17:1-11 <https://bit.ly/3bRi1cP>

SERMON Rev. Andy Smothers

HYMN “Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies” #462

Text: Christ, whose glory fills the skies, Christ, the true, the only Light, Sun of Righteousness, arise, triumph o’er the shades of night; Dayspring from on high, be near; Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn unaccompanied by thee; joyless is the day’s return ‘til thy mercy’s beams I see; ‘til they inward light impart, glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit, then, this soul of mine; pierce the gloom of sin and grief; fill me, Radiancy divine; scatter all my unbelief; more and more thyself display, shining to the perfect day.

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER AND LORD’S PRAYER

{I invite you to pray as a household offering your various praises, thanksgivings, and requests to God aloud. Close with the Lord’s Prayer.}

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. AMEN.

CONFESSION OF FAITH Heidelberg Catechism (Questions 46-49)

One: What do you mean by saying, “He ascended to heaven”?

All: **That Christ, while his disciples watched, was taken up from the earth into heaven and remains there on our behalf until he comes again to judge the living and the dead.**

One: But isn’t Christ with us until the end of the world as he promised us?

All: **Christ is true human and true God. In his human nature Christ is not now on earth; but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is never absent from us.**

One: If his humanity is not present wherever his divinity is, then aren’t the two natures of Christ separated from each other?

All: **Certainly not. Since divinity is not limited and is present everywhere, it is evident that Christ’s divinity is surely beyond the bounds of the humanity that has been taken on, but at the same time his divinity is in and remains personally united to his humanity.**

One: How does Christ’s ascension to heaven benefit us?

All: **First, he is our advocate in heaven in the presence of his Father. Second, we have our own flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that Christ our head will also take us, his members, up to himself. Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth, as a corresponding pledge. By the Spirit’s power we seek not earthly things but the things above, where Christ is, sitting at God’s right hand.**

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Clerk of Session: Marla Bruner
Church Secretary: Wendi Dayrider

Join the online worship playlist from Sunday at 11am at <https://www.conradfirstpres.org/covid-19-worship>. Alternatively, you can listen to the Gospel lesson and sermon at 11:30 am on Sunday by calling (978) 990-5110 and using access code 749966# when prompted. Make sure to include the # key on your phone. Note that there may be a long distance charge depending on your carrier and plan.